

INFORMATION REPORT

CONFIDENTIAL

COUNTRY USSR/Latin America

SUBJECT Change of Soviet Policy Toward
Latin America

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1. The Soviets have begun to put into effect their new policy toward Latin America, which was instituted a few months ago, to shift from political and revolutionary to commercial and economic activities. Over the past several months, increased purchases have reportedly been made in Mexico, Argentina, and Brazil. In line with this new policy, in those countries where commercial ties are being strengthened, social disturbances, if they occur, are managed in such a way that no connection with the Communists will be apparent.
2. This new trend is indicated not only through the purchases of imports by the USSR, but also by the distribution throughout Latin America of samples of articles of Soviet manufacture which the Soviets are willing and able to deliver. The recent sale of large quantities of caviar to Mexico seems directly due to this policy. the general plan may be to build up a two-way trade, to take advantage of the gap created by the export difficulties of the United States due to its rearmament effort.
3. During the past three months large amounts of Soviet gold and diamonds were sent to Latin American countries. Other articles of considerable value, many of which were reportedly stolen from satellite countries, were also made available for sale in Latin America. Part of this trade is being carried on by Swiss, Swedish, and Tangier companies, especially with those countries where the export of certain items might be stopped by the United States.

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